

## MDW ACCIDENT PREVENTION PLAN HANDBOOK

### HOUSEKEEPING

**Safety Training Goal:** An understanding of how good housekeeping contributes to a safe work environment.

#### 1. Introduction.

a. In the workplace, "good housekeeping" isn't the name of a magazine that awards a seal of approval. Instead, it's the term used for keeping the workplace clean, neat, and free of hazards that can cause injury. This isn't just a matter of appearances it is a serious safety issue. In fact, an organization can easily earn OSHA's "seal of disapproval" - a citation for safety standard violations - for failure to practice good housekeeping.

b. There are other advantages to good housekeeping. A neat, clean workplace makes it easier to find things, which saves time and increases productivity. It's a more pleasant place to work, which improves morale. But remember, a real reason for good housekeeping is safety.

#### 2. Discussion.

a. Anyone who doesn't think good housekeeping is an important safety issue should think again. Here are some of the more common hazards associated with poor housekeeping practices:

(1) Slips, trips and falls are caused by leaving things on the floor that don't belong there (boxes, paper clips, piles of scraps, spilled liquid, hoses, electrical cords, etc.).

(2) Injuries, such as bruises broken bones, and even concussions, can occur when heavy objects, such as tools or boxes, are left on the edge of a surface or piled carelessly so that they can easily fall.

(3) Cuts, punctures, and splinters can be the result of leaving sharp-edged or pointed tools in the wrong place or by failing to clean up and discard broken or damaged items.

(4) Electrical hazards from overloaded circuits, damaged electrical cords, or allowing electrical tools and equipment to become wet.

(5) Fire and explosion as a result of burning objects or sparks that contact piles of flammable materials (such as sawdust or flammable or explosive chemicals).

(6) Chemical exposure includes inhaling dangerous vapors or contact with skin or eyes because a container is not properly sealed and put away.

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b. Many so-called "accidents" involving these types of hazards are really the result of plain carelessness. In other words, they could easily have been prevented if someone had taken the time to remove the hazard in the first place.

c. Preventing Accidents and Injuries. Practicing good housekeeping goes a long way toward preventing injuries and accidents. Everyone should make it a habit to follow these good housekeeping rules:

(1) Always keep floors clear of anything that can cause a slip, trip, or fall.

(2) Don't leave boxes, electrical cords, or other objects out in the middle of passageways.

(3) Clean up all liquid spills immediately.

(4) Loose or damaged floor boards should be reported so that they can be repaired.

(5) When you're through using an item or piece of equipment, put it back where it belongs.

(6) Don't leave heavy objects or sharp tools where they can easily fall and cause a contact injury or puncture wound.

(7) Discard broken items that have jagged edges.

(8) Avoid fires by constantly being alert to electrical safety and the presence of flammable material - including dust and grease.

(9) Properly dispose of flammable trash to avoid accidental contact with flames.

(10) Keep flammable and explosive chemicals in proper containers when you've finished working with them.

### 3. Conclusion.

a. Good housekeeping is everyone's responsibility. Don't assume that someone else is going to clean up a mess or take the proper precautions. Make it your business to remove hazards from the workplace.

b. Fortunately, practicing good housekeeping is really very easy, once you've made it a habit. It only takes a few seconds to put things away properly or to clean up and potentially hazardous materials. These few seconds are well worth it if they prevent a serious injury. And, you'll discover you work faster and better in a clean workplace.

# ***GOOD HOUSEKEEPING ON THE JOB***

A messy workplace may be a fire waiting to happen. Poorly maintained tools, careless smoking habits and combustibles left close to open flames or sparks are some of the biggest causes of workplace fires. Make it part of your daily routine to keep your work area free of these and other fire hazards.

## **A Clean Work Area**

Clean up your work area as you go: place wood scraps and sawdust in a covered metal trash can, clean up spills, and vacuum around electrical panel boxes and other places where sparks might occur. (Sparks can ignite the dust that collects in these areas.) Dispose of combustible trash such as oily or paint-soaked rags—in tight metal containers that you empty daily.

## **Tools and Equipment**

Make sure motors and machine tools are clean, well oiled and in good working order. Watch for signs of friction that could cause overheating. Don't let transmission shafts or bearings overheat, especially in an area where there's dust and lint. Remember to turn off equipment after use if it's appropriate.

## **Smoking Areas, Storage Areas and Exits**

Only smoke in designated smoking areas and encourage others to do the same. Dispose of ashes and cigarette butts properly.

Keep storage areas clean and organized. Some chemicals are dangerous when stored together: check chemical labels and Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) for storage

guidelines. Don't store oxygen cylinders near combustible materials. Make sure aisles, exits, stairs and passageways are not used for storage and are free of trash or other

been inspected and re-pressurized if necessary.

## **Protect Yourself**


Good housekeeping practices will



materials that could spread a fire or block your exit.

## **Fire Fighting Equipment**

Fire extinguishers are effective for many small and self-contained fires that can be safely extinguished on the spot. Know where fire extinguishers are kept and how to use them to put out small fires. Check to see whether fire extinguishers have

certainly reduce the risk of fire in your workplace. But if fire does occur, you should know where fire alarm boxes are located and how to evacuate the building via established escape routes. Take the time to teach yourself, and other workers, about fire safety! 

# Good Housekeeping is No Joke!

**Many workplace accidents are caused by carelessness and sloppiness.**

**Slips, trips, and falls**—from heavy objects, electrical cords, etc. being left where they don't belong or spills that aren't cleaned up.

**Contact injuries**—from bumping into things or heavy objects falling.



**Cuts, punctures, and splinters**—from sharp tools or items with jagged edges not being put away or cleaned up.

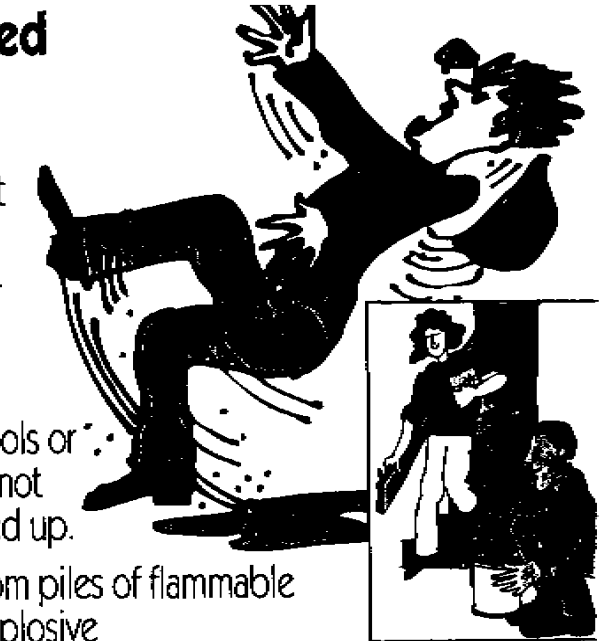


**Fire and explosion**—from piles of flammable material, flammable or explosive chemicals, or electrical hazards.



**Chemical exposure**—from not cleaning up spills or failure to store hazardous chemicals in proper, covered containers.

**Good housekeeping prevents accidents—  
it's everyone's responsibility!**



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# An Office Safety Quiz

Safety hazards in an office? Yes! Accidents can and do happen, even in an office setting. Your awareness of these hazards can influence your personal safety and the safety of your coworkers. Check out your safety awareness by taking this short quiz:

	YES	NO
1 Do you know the electrical hazards of your equipment, • cords and cables?		
2 Is your work area free of all tripping • or slipping hazards?		
3 Do you know the locations of first aid equipment, • fire extinguishers and fire alarm switches?		
4 Do you participate in fire and disaster drills or know • your building's disaster escape routes?		
5 Do you watch for unsafe conditions in your • work area and report them?		
6 Do you ask for help lifting heavy • or awkward items?		
7 Before using a step ladder, do you always unfold it • rather than lean it unfolded against a wall?		
8 While using a file cabinet, do you leave open • only one drawer at a time?		
9 Do you arrive at work rested, • sober and stress-free?		
10 Do you know where to dispose of common • office chemicals and their containers?		

**W**hat's your safety score? If you answered yes 9–10 times, give yourself a pat on the back. You're not likely to be the cause of an office accident. If you answered yes 7–8 times, just a little extra attention will boost your safety 100 percent. If you answered yes 6 or fewer times, you could be headed for some unpleasant surprises. Take a little time now to turn those "NOs" into "YESes."